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ABSTRACT

To develop a more accurate and functional definition of "real communication" in the second language classroom, research into the language of teachers and students in their interactions was undertaken through classroom observation. The results show that the assumption that second language classroom language can be described as focusing either on form or on message does not reflect a third language category, "restricted" language, such as that of many teacher questions. This form focuses completely on message but transfers no information. It is suggested that the existence of this category may explain in part why teachers are unable to move into true communicative teaching but have stayed in an approach dominated by restricted language questions, which limits student participation to responding to questions. Examination of one unusual classroom interaction pattern led to development of a classroom activity/approach, entitled "The Teacher is Unprepared Approach," in which the interaction language must be unrestricted and the discourse pattern must correspond to that of native-speaker interaction. The approach is found to work because the conversational initiative lies with the students and all of the language generated is unrestricted. (MSE)

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A Search for a Definition through Classroom Observation Research

FINAL REPORT

SUBMITTED
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WHAT CONSTITUTES 'GENUINE' COMMUNICATION IN THE ADULT L2 CLASSROOM?

A Search for a Definition through Classroom Observation Research

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ABSTRACT

To develop a more accurate and more functional definition of 'real communication' in the L2 classroom, research into the language of teachers and students was carried out. Researchers worked from the binary (+/- communicative) viewpoint that has dominated the discussion of L2 instruction for over a decade. Fifteen adult ESL classes were observed in progress. An observation instrument was used to record the verbal interaction. The results show that the assumption that L2 classroom language can be described as involving either a focus on form (- communicative) or a focus on message (+ communicative) is not correct. There exists a third category of language--the language of many teacher questions--that the researchers label 'restricted'. These restricted language questions involve a complete focus on message but involve no transfer of information. The existence of these +/- communicative questions explains, in part, why teachers have been unable to move into genuine communicative teaching. The results also show that L2 teachers have moved away from the teaching and practicing of language structures (audiolingualism in all its forms). The research indicates that teachers are not moving toward 'communicative teaching' but rather toward an approach dominated by restricted language questions. As a result of this approach, student participation is largely limited to responding to teacher solicitations: students seldom raise new topics, seldom react and almost never direct questions to other students. After studying one classroom in which the pattern of student-teacher interaction was very unusual, researchers were able to develop a fuller definition of 'real communication': 1) the language of the interaction must be 'unrestricted' (involving no restricted language questions) and 2) the pattern of discourse must correspond to that pattern found in native-speaker conversation. Based on this definition, researchers developed a classroom activity/approach -- 'The Teacher Is Unprepared Approach' -- that assures that the discourse of the classroom will be native-speaker-like. The approach works because 1) the conversational initiative lies with the students, and because 2) all of the language generated is 'unrestricted'.

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INTRODUCTION

Communicative

Communicative--one adjective has dominated the field of second language teaching and learning for the past ten to fifteen years. The literature is overflowing with discussions of communicative competence, communicative syllabuses and communicative approaches. Merrill Swain (1984) sums up the situation well: "It almost goes without saying that the current buzz-word of the second language teaching profession is 'communicative'. (p. 7)

The recent emphasis on the need for generating genuine communication in the classroom arose in large part from the many excellent studies of child language acquisition, studies which indicated that children acquire a language through exposure to genuine communication with caretakers. But this 'new' emphasis is not so new Krashen and Terrill (1983) tell us. They claim that the present preoccupation with a communicative approach mirrors the focus of the Direct Approach that was popular at the turn of the century. Language teaching methodology has, in one sense, come full circle. But between the Direct Approach and the present communicative approaches, a large number of methods, theories and schemes have come into being. It is difficult to understand fully what has happened to L2[1] pedagogy in this century since the shifts in outlook have often been so sudden and dramatic. But understanding the shifts is made easier, writes Keith Johnson (1982), if we figure out what each new approach or theory was in reaction to.

One way, then, for us to understand 'communicative language teaching' is to ask, "What is it a reaction against?" (Johnson, 1982,p. 5). Since the 1950's, students have been taught mastery of the forms of language--the audiolingual approach in all its versions--in a very clearly ordered fashion. The student studied the regular present tense, the present tense continuous, the regular past tense, the irregular past tense, and so on. After the students had mastered a significant number of the structures of a language, they were encouraged to use them in conversation. It was all quite neat and orderly; but teachers began doubting the value of such a dry, controlled approach, and research indicated that the drilling of the forms of a language did not contribute to oral fluency. (Lamendella, 1979)

The emphasis on the forms of language was appealing, though. One could develop a coherent, easily implemented syllabus. Although redirecting the focus of language learning away from forms and towards content brought second language learning more in line with the process of learning that children go through, there were problems. The adult could apparently, like the child, learn the structure of a second language indirectly as a result of focusing on content and meaning. But developing a focus-on-

meaning syllabus which was as neat, orderly and utilitarian as the audiolingual syllabus was very difficult.

Part of the difficulty lay with our familiarity with the terms 'communicative' and 'communication' which were used to describe this new approach to L2 teaching. Many educators believed that they knew what the terms meant and that there was simply a need to put the new communicative approach into practice. And textbook publishers often recycled previous material under a new title page to which the term 'communicative' was added.

Real Communication

For years, educators and researchers, writing in the language teaching journals, have been admonishing teachers to generate 'real communication' in the classroom. Douglas Brown (1984), for example, in an admirable attempt to give teachers guidelines for effective teaching began with the following advice:

> We should do everything we can to keep the subject matter of language classes interesting, relevant, communicative, and, in a broad sense of the term, comprehensible. (p. 279. Underline is ours.)

But what is communicative subject matter? What is a teacher to conclude from Brown's advice? There are many teachers who are genuinely concerned with generating and sustaining real communication in the L2 classroom, but who are not certain what 'real communication' means in the context of a formal classroom setting. Teachers read articles with titles such as "Making Drills Communicative" (Johnson, 1980) which confuse the issue even further.

When Allen, Frohlich and Spada (1984), working on a five-year research project, developed an observation scheme, The Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT), they chose not to define communicative language teaching at all, preferring rather to compile a "list of indicators of communicative behavior." (p.234)

Despite Allen et al.'s understandable reluctance to define the terms, we decided that in our work we would search for a more useful definition of 'real communication' by looking hard at teacher-student verbal interaction in the adult L2 classroom. We hoped, also, to be able to offer teachers suggestions for the development of a classroom approach which would promote 'real communication'.

We began our study, therefore, by considering the nature of the language of the classroom, and sought the answers to two questions:

1. What classroom language can be described as communicative?

2. What does an analysis of classroom language tell us about communicative language teaching?

Theoretical Framework

The second language classroom is a very complex setting, involving many factors which cannot be controlled. Carrying out classroom research requires selection -- we cannot study all of the important elements so we isolate and focus on but a few. Michael Stubbs (1976) strongly recommends that researchers work within a theoretical framework so that there is a solid foundation on which to observe and interpret the behavior of students and teachers. Without a theoretical framework, we risk ending up with observations which are neither systematic nor analyzable.

We chose to work from the language acquisition/language learning distinction developed by Stephen Krashen of the University of California. This distinction is but one part of a broad theory of language acquisition which is often identified as the Monitor Model (Krashen, 1978). Krashen's theory is so well known that only a brief summary is needed here. According to Krashen, adults have two independent systems for developing ability in second languages: subconscious language 'acquisition'; and conscious language 'learning'. 'Acquisition' is a process very similar to that process used by children in the learning of languages. To 'acquire' a language, one must take part in meaningful interaction in the language; there must be exposure to real communication in which the speakers are focused on the message being conveyed. If the speakers are concerned with the form of the language rather than with the message, the result is language 'learning'. Drills, for example, which are designed to focus learner attention on the forms of language are 'learning' promoting. Krashen hypothesizes that language that is 'learned' does not contribute to fluency and is not available to the learner for production in normal conversation with native speakers. People who 'learn' languages, therefore, will not be able to use what they 'learned' when they enter into free conversation. The value of studying language forms, the value of drilling and language practice, is that the learner develops a 'monitor'which can serve to correct or modify the learner's output. But the output results only from language that has been 'acquired'.

Krashen's theory suited our research needs for two reasons: First, he spells out the consequences of not taking part in genuine communication when learning a second language. He holds that in programs where language is taught through drills, model dialogues and explanations, students will not be able to use the language for purposes of oral communication.

Second, Krashen's distinction enables us to establish a simple, binary system for the analysis of classroom language:

+ communicative = language acquisition
- communicative = language learning

This binary system provides us with a starting point for the analysis of all student-teacher verbal interaction.

Opposition to Krashen's Theory

We chose to use Krashen's distinction realizing full well that it has come under serious attack from numerous theorists and researchers. Of course, much of the appeal of Krashen's entire Monitor Model Theory comes from the widespread attention it receives. Some of the opposition to his theory, especially the opposition to his position that language acquisition must, without question, be the primary goal of all L2 teaching, comes from teachers and administrators in programs (colleges and universities especially) where the focus of the instruction remains on the formal presentation of target language forms (Krahnke, 1983).

But other, more serious, opposition comes from researchers who, like Krashen, are attempting, to develop theories of how adults learn second languages. Kevin Gregg (1984) describes Krashen's Monitor Model as "...probably the most ambitious and most influential attempt in recent years to construct an overall theory of second language acquisition." (p.81) Gregg, however, does not like Krashen's theory very much, arguing that the terms 'acquisition' and 'learning' are very poorly defined and are, therefore, of little use in the development of theory. Moreover, the 'acquisition/learning' distinction is simply wrong, Gregg claims, because he learned to speak Japanese without participating in real communication in the language. 'Learning' became 'acquisition', says Gregg, demonstrating that the two systems that Krashen describes as separate and distinct are not.

Barry McLaughlin, (1978), like Gregg, is uncomfortable with the terminology that Krashen uses. McLaughlin believes that the terms subconscious and conscious, used to explain 'learning' and 'acquisition' are unscientific, having little experimental meaning. Since the explanatory terms are weak, says McLaughlin, the distinction itself is weak. As an alternative to Krashen's Monitor Model, McLaughlin (1983) proposes another distinction, automatic vs. controlled processing, which he claims not only

explains second language learning better, but can be tested empirically. For McLaughlin, this information processing approach, since it emanates from cognitive psychology, is more scientific than Krashen's theory.

Schumann's Viewpoint

Despite the very heavy criticism that has been leveled at Krashen's theory, we chose to make use of it, for we believe, as John Schumann (1983) has eloquently explained, that conflicting theoretical viewpoints will not and need not be resolved. Schumann advises us to view all research as both science and art. Theories of language acquisition should be evaluated aesthetically as well as scientifically, he says, because ultimately all our theories are no more than metaphors. Schumann suggests that we learn from quantum mechanics (physics)

> ...by entertaining the possibility that we create the reality that we study, that observation alters reality and that the phenomena we investigate may only be amenable to description and not to (absolute) prediction or (testable) explanation. (p.109)

If we view theoretical constructs as metaphors, we can better understand the apparently conflicting claims that are made by researchers such as Krashen and McLaughlin. Both of their theories are valuable, believes Schumann, since both reflect the different experiences in language learning that Krashen and McLaughlin went through. Each man created a metaphor that explains his own experience. Both views -- 'acquisition' vs. 'learning' and automatic vs. controlled processing -- can co-exist as two different paintings of the language learning experience. Neither explanation need be labeled as correct or incorrect.

Accepting Schumann's view, we conclude that Krashen's distinction, which to us is intuitively appealing, serves as a good framework for studying adult L2 classroom verbal interaction. Krashen's 'acquisition/learning' distinction is, as we stated earlier, particularly appealing since it can be represented as a binary system -- (+) communicative and (-) communicative. Not only Krashen but numerous other linguists have described classroom language and/or classroom teaching in binary terms.

Plus and Minus Communicative

D.A. Wilkins (1976) in his influential text Notional Syllabus, described second language teaching as being based on an analytic or on a synthetic approach. His breakdown relates directly to Krashen's in that Wilkins describes the synthetic approach as the systematic presentation of grammatical structures (forms), and the analytic approach as the teaching of actual language behavior. We believe that a parallel can be made to the 'acquisiton/learning' distinction:

Synthetic = (-) functional, emphasis on language forms.

Analytic = (+) functional, emphasis on language in use.

Breen (1982) also developed a binary view of classroom teaching, positing that classroom practice involves either authentic (our +) or non-authentic (our -) tasks. But this dualism is not new to the analysis of classroom instruction for as far back as 1972, Widdowson characterized L2 instruction as 1) the teaching of linguistic forms, and 2) the teaching of communicative functions. This form vs. function distinction has lain at the center of the debate over how best to teach adults a second language for over a decade.

But Krashen alone has taken a theoretical position regarding the outcome of the decision to teach language 'forms' rather than language 'functions', to teach 'usage' rather than language 'use', boldly claiming that the teaching of language forms contributes little or nothing to the development of fluency. We believe that any resolution of this issue--which classroom practices contribute to target language fluency--must begin with research into the nature of the language of the classroom.

Classroom Observation

To carry out our analysis of teacher-student verbal interaction, we decided to observe classes in progress. As Stubbs (1976) has succintly expressed it, "...if we want to know how people behave in classrooms, then we have to observe them in classrooms." (p.273.) We decided to observe teacher-led, whole-class lessons since most adult ESL programs are organized in this way. We realized that different results would be found if we chose to observe small-group lessons. But with the recent emphasis placed on listening comprehension and on teacher talk as input, formal instruction will very likely continue to center around teacher-led, whole-class activities.

Though our observation of classes in progress would be systematic, we did not consider our research to be "objective" in the scientific sense of the word. Our research reflects our preoccupations and our biases. Even when studying classrooms closely and systematically, a researcher sees only a very small part of the whole; Edwards and Furlong (1978) warn us that there is much we do not observe because we are 'set' to see and record only certain, often obvious, patterns of behavior. (p 37.)

Moreover, since we use an observation instrument to record our observations, we have to accept the fact that we are forcing what is really a rather chaotic reality (classroom interaction) into pidgeon holes (observation categories). And though observational instruments are designed to be non-judgemental, they cannot produce 'hard' truth. We consider observational instruments to be what Michael Long (1980) describes them to be: theoretical claims about L2 learning and teaching.

Underlying our instrument, underlying our entire research effort, in fact, are numerous theoretical assumptions, the most important of which is that certain classroom language contributes more to the development of language fluency than does other classroom language. Any conclusions we reach, therefore, must be judged in light of that assumption.

Yet, in spite of all the problems and weaknesses inherent in the kind of classroom observation research that we undertake, we believe that by studying teachers and students as they interact, we can develop fresh insights into the language learning process; we can present the familiar in a new light and make explicit that which we take for granted. (Edwards and Furlong, 1978).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT

Our classroom observation research was initially based on what seemed to us to be a simple objective--analyze classroom language from the acquisition/learning viewpoint. We aimed to divide the language of the classroom into:

1) Acquisition-promoting language
2) Learning-promoting language.

Our preliminary observations led us to realize, however, that what we were undertaking was much more interesting and much more complex than we had anticipated. Before detailing our early discoveries, we will describe the development of our observation instrument.

In the hope that we could discover some of the difficulties of classroom observations for ourselves, we decided to try our hand at instrument development before studying the numerous instruments that have been created over the past 20 years. We had, however, some previous exposure to one observation scheme--the Flanders' Interactional Analysis Categories (FIAC), (see Flanders, 1970)--which was designed for native language content classroom use and which was intended primarily for teacher training. We entered the classroom armed with a primitive instrument which we had developed ourselves and which we hoped covered completely the language of the classroom.

We arrived at a list of 27 categories (see Figure 1) which we used to observe several classes. The 27-category approach led us to conclude that:

- Real-time coding is impossible when working with a large number of categories;
- A large number of general categories may tell a researcher less, rather than more, about classroom language. For example, "teacher repeats," from our 27 category system, masks the importance of teacher correction which can be done through repeating, and masks "teacher drilling," which can include repeating.

FIGURE 1

ANALYSIS OF CLASSROOM LANGUAGE IN ADULT ESL PROGRAMS

Teacher

1. T carries out classroom management
2. T expounds (gives information, states facts, describes, etc.)
3. T explains vocabulary, grammar, phonology
4. T gives instructions/directions (non-classroom management)
5. T comments/reacts (other than that language in #3)
6. T questions: information tag yes/no
7. T corrects directly
8. T corrects indirectly: restatement, paraphrase, repetition
9. T patterns: drilling, memorized dialogue practice
10. T repeats for clarification or for modeling
11. T repeats: for patterning, not for clarification
12. T reads aloud, students listen only
13. T reads aloud, students listen and read along
14. T responds, unrestricted
15. T responds, restricted
16. T jokes

Student/Students

17. S responds, unrestricted
18. S responds, restricted
19. S comments/reacts
20. S questions, unrestricted
21. S questions, restricted
22. S expounds (gives information, states facts, describes, etc.)
23. SS repeat
24. S repeats
25. S reads aloud, class listens only
26. S reads aloud, class listens and reads along
27. S jokes

After realizing that we needed a streamlined system of observation, we studied numerous instruments which have been designed for the second language classroom. Michael Long has provided an extensive list of instruments along with a broad analysis of each (Long, 1980). We should point out, however, that a few more recent studies which include observation instruments, such as COLT (Allen, Frohlich, and Spada, 1984), have been published since Long completed his list. Many of the instruments studied were teacher-training oriented, and did not fit with our focus on the communicative nature of classroom language; others were unwieldy, and therefore inappropriate for real-time coding. (Fanselow's instrument, FOCI, (1977), is especially interesting and insightful, but cannot be used for real-time coding.)

We finally concluded that the four 'moves' of Bellack's instrument (1966), though developed for native language classrooms, would best meet our needs. We consider Bellack's 'moves' to be low-inference--though this is subject to challenge--and low-inference categories are necessary for real-time coding (Long, 1980). A number of other observation instruments include categories such as 'teacher praises' (Flanders, 1970) or 'academic interaction' (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974) which are clearly high inference and thus lead to a very subjective interpretation of classroom interaction. Such high inference categories also seriously weaken the reliability of an instrument. Bellack's four 'moves' avoid some of these serious shortcomings.

We chose to use only the 'moves' of Bellack's system, and not his higher levels of cycle, subgame and game because, as Long points out, "the use of categories which include events at more than one level involves high inference." (Long, 1980, p. 7) Bellack's system of 'moves' has the additional advantage of being applicable to a wide range of formal and informal settings. A researcher can, for example, gather data on conversation from the world of work, and compare the data to that of the language classroom.

Having chosen Bellack's 'moves', we took the next step of overlaying our learning(-)/acquisition(+) distinction onto the 'moves', arriving at a more practical instrument (see FIGURE 2).

Discoveries

After studying this breakdown of student/teacher interaction, and after attempting to apply this analysis to the classroom, we made certain discoveries:

All structuring is communicative

FIGURE 2

Analysis of Teacher/Student Verbal Interaction

Teacher structures	+
Student structures	+
Teacher reacts	+
Student reacts	+
Teacher solicits	+/-
Student solicits	+/-
Teacher responds	+/-
Student responds	+/-

In this system, (+) equals: acquisition-promoting language
communicative language
focus on meaning

(-) equals: learning-promoting language
mechanical language
focus on form

When a teacher makes a presentation to the class, be it on grammar, usage, vocabulary, culture, classroom management, exercise management or on content course material, the language of that presentation is real communication. It is the same as if we attended a lecture on the origin of the human species in East Africa at the National Geographic Society. There is a focus on the message, not on the form. Such presentation of language has been labeled as 'telling' (Edwards & Furlong, 1978). When someone is 'telling' someone else about something, no matter what the topic, there is genuine communication taking place.[2]

Consider the following presentation of the past tense to a class. The teacher says,

> Now in English we have two kinds of simple past tense verbs. We use them both in the same way, but they look different. One group of past tense verbs is regular and one is irregular. The regular past tense always ends in '-ed.' The irregular past tense verbs have many different endings and many different forms. For example, 'eat' becomes 'ate' in the past tense, and 'go' becomes 'went.' We have about 90 irregular verbs that we use regularly in English, and you have to memorize them.

What the students are hearing, in terms of communication, is a series of present tense sentences. The 'input' is in the present tense though the subject of the presentation is the past tense. The teacher is 'telling' in the present tense. Notice that the verbs (underlined below) in the teacher's presentation are all in the present tense.

> Now in English we have two kinds of simple past tense verbs. We use them both in the same way, but they look different. One group of past tense verbs is regular and one is irregular. The regular past tense always ends in '-ed.' The irregular past tense verbs have many different endings and many different forms. For example, 'eat' becomes 'ate' in the past tense, and 'go' becomes 'went.' We have about 90 irregular verbs that we use regularly in English, and you have to memorize them.

We had thought, and numerous researchers imply in their writing, that grammatical explanations by the teacher are not communicative. In fact, in the literature on the Monitor Model, such grammatical explanations are treated as learning-promoting activities; that is, the students are 'learning' the past tense, and such learning will only be available as a Monitor. But we believe that it is more important to emphasize that, for the learner, the outcome of the above grammar presentation is that she acquires the present tense. There is no exposure (input that can become intake) whatsoever to the past tense in the above 'past tense' lesson.

This fact leads us to conclude that to bring about a more focused discussion of communication and of acquisition-promoting activities, it is necessary to distinguish presentations of grammar from drilling of grammatical structures. The two are very different. (By drilling we mean all those activities--model dialogs, repetition, substitution practice, etc.--where the focus is clearly on form.) We suggest that the two activities be distinguished in the following way:

- Structuring about grammar = communicative language (+)
- Drilling grammatical structures = mechanical language (-)

By making this distinction, we can advance the discussion of the issue of (+) and (-) communication in the classroom and better analyze what teacher talk means.

Restricted Language: A New Category

Returning to the basic outline of our observation scheme,

Structure Reacting	+
Soliciting Responding	+/-

we see that language which is (-) communicative can only occur within the soliciting and responding moves. As we have discussed, structuring ('telling') is always (+) communicative. Reacting, also, is always (+) communicative because it is by definition spontaneous, involving complete focus on the message of the previous speaker.

In Bellack's system, solicitations break down into two categories: questions and commands, both of which are followed by responses. For example,

T sol: What's your name? (Question)
S res: Lin.

T sol: Tell me your name. (Command)
S res: Peter.

Drilling of structures and practice in pronunciation are always solicitation/response combinations. So (-) communicative language in the classroom can be illustrated by the following:

T sol: Mary has a cold . . John . . .[3]
S res: John has a cold, too.

T sol: Phil can help you with your problem.
S res: Phil could have helped you with your problem.

T sol: Do you speak French?
S res: No, I don't.
T sol: Does John speak French?
S res: No, he doesn't.

Now look at another example:

The teacher and class have just read a news article. The teacher is asking the students questions about the article.

T sol: Which candidate has dropped out of the Presidential race?
S res: John Glenn.
T sol: Why did he drop out?
S res: Not enough support.

The teacher solicitations cannot, we believe, be described as simply (+) communicative. The teacher has no need for information since she knows the answer. There's no unpredictability in the student's response (Johnson, 1982). On the other hand, the teacher's solicitation's cannot be labeled as simply (-) communicative because the focus is not on the form of the utterance but is clearly on the message.

After coming across many of these teacher solicitations (shown above) in our initial observations, we realized that we had to create another category, the language of which would be neither truly communicative (+) nor truly mechanical (-). We chose to label this language 'restricted.' (+/-).

We took this term 'restricted' from Gertrude Moskowitz' description of categories in her Foreign Language Interaction (FLINT) System (1971).[4] But we use Moskowitz' term in a new way; she was not concerned with language per se but with teacher training. She limited her discussion of 'restricted' language to its effect on student participation.[5]

'Restricted' language, to our knowledge, has not been researched intensively from an L2 learning point of view. The only discussion of 'restricted' language that we have been able to find is in research on L1 content classes. In the literature on L1 classes, the terms 'closed question' (Barnes, et al., 1969) is used to describe what we have termed 'restricted' language teacher solicitations in the L2 classroom. L1 classroom researchers emphasize that most questions directed to students are questions to which the teacher already knows the answer (Flanders, 1970; Bellack, 1966; Stubbs, 1976). For example:

T sol: Who supported the Americans in the Revolutionary War?
S res: The French.

Or the teacher asks questions the answers to which are common knowledge:

T sol: Why shouldn't you drink and drive?

In both of these cases, the teacher has no need for information; the student knows that the teacher knows the answer. There is no unpredictability in the response. Morine-Dershimer and Tenenberg (1981)[6] analyzed teacher questioning in six L1 language arts classes. They concluded that the use of pseudo-questions led to low student attention and to low student achievement in reading.

Restricted solicitations, which, as we discovered, are also found in L2 classrooms, cannot be easily defined from a linguistic point of view. Native language researchers criticize such questions as not contributing to critical thinking on the part of the students; but linguists will want to determine the effect of such questions on language acquisition and on the transferability of such language to discourse outside the classroom. Stubbs (1976), who calls this questioning "info games" says it's a fundamental feature of instruction. Since researchers have concluded that the artificial language of drilling may not contribute significantly to the learner's ability to use the target language in conversations with native speakers, (Lamendella, 1979), we cannot escape the conclusion that the restricted language of L2 teachers also has serious implications for language learning. (See our discussion in Conclusions.) After having identified restricted language, we arrived at a total of three categories for analyzing classroom language:

(+) communicative, (±) restricted, and (-) communicative.

In our final observation instrument, we decided to label (+) communicative as 'unrestricted,' language, and (-) communicative as 'frozen' language. This gave us the following framework:

Unrestricted Restricted Frozen[7]

Our first step would be to find out how much of each of these categories of language exist in the adult L2 classroom. Only through classroom observation could we begin to measure the importance of restricted language to classroom teaching. Some of the questions we hoped to answer through our observations were:

- What type of language dominates the L2 class: unrestricted, restricted, or frozen?
- What brings about restricted language in the classroom?
- Can restricted language be easily identified?

The Classroom Observation Instrument: Final Form

The final observation instrument (Figure 3) consists of two sets of categories arranged in a simple matrix. Vertically on the left-hand side are the 'moves': (1) T structures, (2) S reacts, etc. Horizontally across the top are the three descriptors for the nature of language: 'unrestricted' (U), 'restricted' (R), and 'frozen' (F). 'Moves' observed in the classroom are analyzed as to the nature of communication, and are so recorded on a tally sheet.

Before explaining our three-part analysis of the nature of language, we will first discuss Bellack's four 'moves' in some detail. According to Bellack (1966),

> Pedagogical 'moves', the basic units of classroom discourse, describe the verbal activities of teachers and pupils in the classroom. There are four basic types of moves which characterize the verbal interplay of teachers and pupils: structuring and soliciting, which are initiatory moves; and responding and reacting, which are reflexive moves. (p. 16)

The structuring 'move' consists of any communication that sets the stage for subsequent behavior (Fanselow, 1977). Examples of structuring include statements such as, "Today we're going to talk about the present perfect," "Next week we'll have our final exam," and "Okay, turn to page 83 and begin reading." Structuring 'moves' are not reactions. They are not questions or answers to questions. They are initiatory 'moves' that direct the course of classroom topics, discussions, procedures, etc.

The soliciting 'move' includes asking questions and stating commands. This 'move' elicits a verbal or physical response. Examples of solicitations are "Where's Juan today?" "Sit down, please," and "Why didn't the man wait for his wife?"

The responding 'move', as its name implies, functions as a response to the soliciting 'move'. Questions are followed by answers, for example, "Does anyone know how to spell 'sincere'?" "Yes, I do." Commands are also followed by responses. "Okay, open your workbooks to page 123." The students open their books. The responding move does not occur without the soliciting 'move'; it is reflexive.

FIGURE 3

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Analysis of Teacher-Student Verbal Interaction

	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	FROZEN
1. T Structures/ Reacts			
2. S Reacts			
3. S Structures			
4. T Solicits			
5. S Responds			
6. S Solicits			
7. T Responds			
8. T Corrects	Indirect		
	Direct		

23

24

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The reacting 'move' may follow structuring, soliciting or other reacting 'moves', but it is not a direct response to any of them. It generally functions as a rating or modification of a previous 'move'; therefore, it may or may not occur. A teacher's rating of a student's performance is an example of a reacting 'move':

T sol: What did the man say to the policeman?
S res: Don't shoot!
T rea: Good.

Since there are four 'moves' and two participants (teacher and student), the total number of 'move' combinations should be eight. But we found in our initial observations that teacher reacting is so pervasive that we could not accurately record such reactions while carrying out real-time coding. Teacher reacting includes all teacher rating of student responses. Teachers constantly use single word reactions to rate student responses and to rate student contributions (structuring) to the class lesson, such as 'Good,' 'Okay,' 'Right,' 'Fine,' 'Uh-huh,' 'Yes,' 'Sure,' and so on. We felt that recording these reactions did not contribute significantly to our study. (Other research may be needed to analyze carefully teacher reaction; such an analysis was not a primary concern of ours.) We were able to capture the patterns of classroom verbal interaction equally well by combining the teacher reaction 'move' with the teacher structuring 'move'.

Even after combining these two 'moves', we still end up with eight categories because we added 'Teacher Corrects' to our instrument. Teacher correction is, in fact, a teacher reaction 'move'. We isolated this particular subtype of teacher reacting because there has been intense discussion of the importance of teacher correction in recent research. (Allwright, 1975; Magnam, 1982; Walz, 1982; Swartz, 1977; Burt, 1975; Chaudron, 1977.) Based on the literature, we established a two-pronged analysis of teacher correction:

Direct Correction
Indirect Correction

In direct correction, the teacher interrupts the flow of the conversation and focuses attention on the form of the student utterance. For example,

S: I go to movies last night.
T: No, I went to the movies last night.

Direct correction can focus on morphology, syntax or phonology.

Indirect correction refers to the technique described by Allwright (1975) whereby the teacher corrects student errors through modeling of the standard form. For example,

S: I go to movies last night.
T: Oh, so you went to the movies.

Our category (8) refers only to correction of linguistic form and does not refer to teacher correction of facts. For example,

S: The United Nations is located in Queens.
T: You mean in Manhattan, don't you?

is a correction of fact and is tallied as S structures/T reacts 'moves'.

The Communicative Value of Moves

The three categories shown horizontally on the observation schedule describe, as we have said, the nature of the language of the 'moves'. Every 'move' is categorized according to its communicative value. For each 'move' we ask the question:

Is the language therein genuine communication (unrestricted), artificial or mechanical communication (frozen),or neither clearly communicative nor clearly mechanical (restricted)?

PROCEDURES

We chose to observe adult classes at the intermediate level since we assumed that students at this level would be able to participate in classroom conversation. We did not choose advanced classes because, in our experience, they are less homogeneous in terms of learner level. Also, we found that there were many fewer advanced classes available for observation in adult L2 programs.

We observed a total of 15 classes in Maryland, Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. in a wide variety of institutions ranging from public school adult education programs and community college programs to community volunteer programs and state refugee programs.

All classes were adult. Some were intensive; some met only four hours per week. No class consisted of learners from only one language background. Every class observed included learners from at least three or four different language groups. Classes met both day and evening.

Tallying

We tallied for a total of one hour, ignoring any portion of a class period that did not involve verbal interaction. For example, if the class was reading an article for five minutes, we had to remain in the room for one hour and five minutes.

After gaining permission to observe classes from program administrators, we delivered a summary of our research and our approach to every teacher who volunteered to assist us (see Appendix A). In some cases, we had an opportunity to discuss our research with teachers before observing. But no matter how much contact was established, we always made the same request to every teacher whose class we scheduled for observation.

We explained that we wanted to observe teacher/student verbal interaction regardless of how it emerged from the classroom syllabus. We asked the teacher not to 'put on' special lessons for our benefit. We requested only that teachers try to avoid silent reading activities or writing practice, both of which generally involve a minimum of verbal interaction.

Real-Time Coding

In our preliminary observations we experimented with audio-recordings of the class lessons. We found that 1) the machinery and the recording process clearly affected both the teacher and the learners; and 2) the quality of the recordings was not high. Since we did not want to alter the normal classroom setting, we did not close windows, turn off heating systems or rearrange classroom furniture. Background noise is in many classes very strong: chairs move, students cough, traffic passes, lighting fixtures, heating and air conditioning systems buzz. We believe that audio-recordings can be used effectively when researchers are studying a few classes or when researchers can control the setting for the instruction. Wanting to observe more than a few classes, and not wanting to interfere in class lessons, we decided to use real-time coding, using only a tally sheet (see Figure 4).

Other researchers have found, moreover, that it takes approximately 20 hours to transcribe one hour of classroom audio-recording. Audio-recordings would have seriously depleted our resources and would have limited us to the observation of a few classrooms.

Finally, the instrument we developed is as simple and straightforward as we could make it: we wanted other teachers to be able to use our instrument in their schools with a minimum of equipment and manpower.

FIGURE 4 — Classroom # 3

OBSERVATION TALLY SHEET

14 Students

1. T Structures
2. S Reacts
3. S Structures
4. T Solicits
5. S Responds
6. S Solicits
7. T Responds
8. T Corrects: Indirect / Direct

1
4R What's today's date?
5U
1 Good
4R What was y's date?
5U
1
1
4R
5U
1
4U Remember that expression?
5U
1
4U Please read that.
5F (Stud reading)
1 Good
4U Do you know the word?
0
4R What's an electricity outage?
5U
1 Good guess
1 An outage is...
4U What was that?
0
4F
5F (Pron.)
1
4R
5U
1 (Discussion)

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We did not address ourselves to students, either before or after the observations. In general, we spoke to teachers only to answer questions they had about our research. We did not participate in any of the class activities, nor did we speak during our observations. Whenever possible, we entered the classroom before the lesson started and sat to the side or in the rear. In most cases, the teacher did not even acknowledge our presence unless the students inquired about us.

Moves

We found that by assigning numbers to each move we were able to code more easily (See Figure 3.) As structuring and reacting are always genuine communication, we did not have to assign them a communicative value during the tallying. Therefore, the unrestricted/restricted/frozen analysis was applied only to:

(4) T solicits
(5) S responds
(6) S solicits
(7) T responds

(See Figure 5. Areas that are shaded designate those 'moves' which cannot occur.)

When a solicitation went unanswered, we marked a '0' after that solicitation:

4U: Does everybody understand the directions?
0

In addition to tallying the moves and coding the nature of the language of the moves, we also, when time allowed, wrote down the actual utterances of solicitation and response moves in an effort to gain insight into restricted language. Figure 4 presents one page of our tally carried out during our observation of classroom # 3.

Reliability Control

Since 1966, Bellack's 'moves' have been used extensively by classroom researchers and the reliability of instruments based on the 'moves' has been established again and again. But by overlaying three categories--'unrestricted', 'restricted', and 'frozen' language--onto the 'moves', we created a matrix that had never been used in research. A check of reliability was therefore necessary.

We hired two experienced adult ESL teachers to carry out a test of reliability. Neither teacher had had any exposure to Bellack's system of 'moves'. The two teacher-scorers were given approximately six hours of training in the use of the instrument. The teachers then observed an adult ESL class in progress for

FIGURE 5

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Analysis of Teacher-Student Verbal Interaction

	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	FROZEN
1. T Structures/ Reacts		NA	NA
2. S Reacts		NA	NA
3. S Structures		NA	NA
4. T Solicits			
5. S Responds			
6. S Solicits			
7. T Responds			
8. T Corrects	Indirect		
	Direct		

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approximately 25 minutes, and made a tally using the same approach and the same scoring sheet (Figure 4) that was used by project researchers. The class observed was teacher-led and whole-group. The students were not aware that a tally was being taken. The tallies of the two teacher-scorers were compared; 88% agreement on total 'moves' was reached. The teachers had no serious difficulty with the horizontal categories that we had created. Most of the disagreement resulted from one scorer tallying more teacher single-word reactions, such as, 'okay', 'right', 'good'. Since in our study the focus was not on teacher structuring/reacting, we felt satisfied with the level of agreement reached by the two teacher-scorers.

Problems In Coding

Structuring and Reacting. As Bellack et. al. (1966) reported in their classic study of the classroom, one of the difficulties in coding 'moves' involves differentiating between structuring and reacting. Soliciting and responding 'moves' are normally distinctive enough to be identified even by an untrained observer. It is difficult, however, to be sure that a person is initiating a new topic (structuring) since she may only be reacting to what was previously said. Moreover, a structuring 'move' may be a combination of new topic and a reaction to a previous topic. Of course, since we had combined teacher structuring with teacher reacting, our coding problem related only to student structuring and to student reacting. In the classes observed, there was so few student structuring 'moves' that we could identify -- students seldom introduce new topics for discussion -- that our coding of these two student 'moves', was, we believe, quite accurate.

We were unable to tally all student reactions; several students often reacted at the same time. When we could distinguish the remarks of the students clearly, we tallied each of the reactions. The tally sheet, then, would show:

1
4U
5U
2
2

'Moves' do not indicate how long someone has spoken. This fact limits, we believe, any serious discussion of the structuring 'move'; structuring 'moves' run the gamut from several sentences to 5 or 10 minutes of uninterrupted talk. Solicitations, responses and reactions are, on the whole, limited to one, two, or three sentences (utterances), however.

Student Responses. Several students responded simultaneously to teacher solicitations, especially when the language was unrestricted. Unrestricted language seems to generate more spontaneity and overlapping speech -- as found in

native-speaker conversation. As we handled the problem of multiple reactions, so we handled the problem of multiple responses: we tallied all those responses that we could clearly identify. The following pattern often appeared on the tally sheet:

1
4
5
5
1

The most serious problem which arose in the tallying of responses is that most student responses consist of only one or two words. When the student was soft-spoken or when there was distracting noise, we may have missed a response 'move'.

Solicitations. (Frozen) When the class was involved in audiolingual drilling, it was sometimes difficult to keep count of the frozen solicitations and responses. This tallying of frozen solicitations and responses was especially difficult in pronunciation practice, where the pace was rapid-fire.

Solicitations. (Restricted) We are quite certain that we erred in the evaluation of some of the teacher solicitations that we labeled unrestricted. Since teacher and students had shared an enormous amount of information in classes prior to our visits, some of the solicitations that appeared to us as unrestricted must have been restricted; in other words,teachers must have been asking questions to which they knew the answers, such as,

T: Where do you live, Jose?

which we labeled unrestricted. The existence of this shared knowledge is one of the most serious impediments to the accurate differentiation of restricted and unrestricted teacher solicitations.

RESULTS OF DATA

In this section, we report on the data 'move' by 'move'. The totals of all 'moves' for the 15 observations are presented in Figure 6. By reading the totals in Figure 6 horizontally from left to right, the reader can quickly obtain a sense of the patterns that emerge from our observations. By data, we mean both the tally made of the moves and the record made of actual utterances (see Figure 4 for examples of utterances recorded.)

1. T Structures: Except for the discovery that all teacher structuring is unrestricted language, the language of real communication (see discussion on p.10), the research sheds no light on the T structuring move itself. The data for T Structures/Reacts is difficult to analyze because, as we pointed out earlier, T structuring can last from 10 seconds to 10

FIGURE 6: Data from 15 Classroom Observations

CLASSROOM

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15
1. T Structures/ Reacts	77	46	130	111	49	40	60	114	50	171	53	44	113	60	93
2. S Reacts	16	2	6	32	15	2	21	6	4	189	22	3	26	27	38
3. S Structures	7	3	1	1	0	0	7	0	3	63	0	0	1	2	35
4U. T Solicits Unrestricted	46	36	64	57	54	16	29	66	95	38	31	70	29	30	97
4R. T Solicits Restricted	16	52	52	40	15	20	26	85	88	0	32	14	54	4	71
4F. T Solicits Frozen	0	57	63	29	24	129	5	97	61	0	18	9	11	30	0
5U. S Responds Unrestricted	64	18	49	82	48	7	43	79	157	57	24	27	58	29	110
5R. S Responds Restricted	0	24	47	0	0	12	12	49	15	0	45	14	20	0	56
5F. S Responds Frozen	28	97	84	45	82	148	4	118	79	55	52	70	33	160	0
6U. S Solicits Unrestricted	36	15	11	13	14	5	12	6	6	68	8	7	7	7	39
6R. S Solicits Restricted	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6F. S Solicits Frozen	0	0	0	12	54	0	0	32	0	0	28	0	0	121	0
7U. T Resonds Unrestricted	32	13	18	12	9	3	11	4	4	48	8	6	7	5	28
7R. T Responds Restricted	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7F. T Responds Frozen	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8D. T Corrects Direct	9	14	13	8	8	8	0	19	0	32	46	27	10	0	0
8I. T Corrects Indirect	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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minutes. But by tallying the T Structures/Reacts 'moves' we were able to identify the patterns of discourse in the classroom which are discussed later in the 'Results' and 'Conclusions' sections.

2. S reacts: The median number of S Reacts moves for the 15 classes was 16. We estimate the average class size to be 15 students. Therefore, an individual student would react only once per hour. And most of the reaction moves that we observed consisted of one or two-word utterances.

3. S structures: Students almost never structured. The median number of S structure moves in the 15 classes was 1. The range of student structuring was quite wide, running from 0 to 63. Students simply did not introduce new topics for discussion excpt in one class, #10, (63 Structuring Moves) to which we devote a special section. (see Classroom Observation #10: A Special Case). This lack of student initiative has surfaced in other classroom observation studies. When Naiman et al. (1978) designed their observation instrument, for example, they did not even include a regular symbol for tallying student initiatives. In their system, it is assumed that the teacher initiates discourse, and in order to tally a student initiative, the scorer has to use a special coding symbol.

4. T solicits: (Unrestricted Language): The median number of teacher unrestricted solicitation was 46 with a wide range, 16 to 97. Our research shows that the occurrence of this 'genuinely communicative' move is quite predictable. Most of the unrestricted teacher solicitations could be placed into one of four areas:

A. Classroom management

Ex: T Sol: When you finish your project, place it on my desk.

T Sol: Turn to page 18 in the orange book.

B. Exercise management

Ex: T Sol: Will you try #2, Mr. Yi.

T Sol: Everybody repeat after me.

C. Private Life Questions

Ex: T Sol: How many children do you have, Mrs. Kim?

T Sol: How long were you in the refugee camp?

D. Personalization of the text/lesson

Ex: T sol: Before we look at the city map, Ali, do you know how to give directions.

What is important to point out about the above is that all four areas are outside the standard curricula that we have been exposed to in our research. That is, unrestricted solicitations by the teacher arise out of movement into an exercise, or text, or they arise as a result of the teacher's leaving the lesson or text. Unrestricted solicitations, then, are not often 'built into' the lesson plan.

5. T Solicits (restricted language): Not only is the number of restricted solicitations significant (Median number: 32, Range: 0-88), but such solicitations outnumber unrestricted solicitations in many classrooms. We have already discussed restricted language solicitations in the section, Restricted Language: A New Category, but we want to emphasize one point: restricted teacher solicitations occur most often when the teacher and students are discussing an article, story, or book which the teacher has already read and is therefore familiar with. (See Appendix B for additional examples of restricted lanaguage questions.)

In the final data, the median number of unrestricted solicitations by the teacher is greater than the number of restricted (46 to 32), but the unrestricted category consists of both

commands
and
questions

whereas the restricted category consists on only questions.[8] In several of our observations, we subtracted the commands (those that we could identify from our notes) from the total of unrestricted teacher solicitations and the picture changed dramatically: restricted language questions outnumber the unrestricted in 8 of the 15 classes.[9]

6. T Solicits (Frozen): Although our final data shows a significant number of frozen solicitations by the teacher (Median number: 24, Range: 0-129), most resulted from pronunciaiton practice rather than from grammar practice. We observed few teachers using traditional audio-lingual drilling of structures.

7. S Responds (Unrestricted): Outside of pronunciation practice, most student participation in ESL classrooms consists of this move. The median number of student unrestricted responses was 49, with a wide range running from 7 to 157. Even though T solicitations are often restricted language types, responses to those solicitations are unrestricted. We believe that students are focusing on the message and are attempting to transfer information to the teacher despite the fact that the teacher has asked a question to which she knows the answer. As we have stated previously, the student's role is largely limited

tc responding because they seldom initiate conversation, and in most classes, they seldom ask questions. (See Result #10).

8. S Responds (Restricted): When students answer questions while reading a text or while looking at a visual aid, their responses are not, in our opinion, truly communicative, but are restricted language responses. The number of these responses, then, was large only in those classes wherein the students were working directly from the text and were using the text as a support. The median number of these responses was 14, with a range from 0 to 56. In five of the fifteen classes, there were no restricted language responses by the students. We would expect to find even more of these student restricted responses in beginning level classrooms, however.

9. S Responds (Frozen): As we discussed in result #6, pronunciation practice generates most of the frozen solicitations and responses in classes. The number of frozen responses by the students will exceed the number of frozen solicitations by the teacher because the teacher often uses commands rather than frozen solicitations to carry out pronunciation drilling. For example, the teacher says:

Repeat everyone.
Repeat Tran.
Try to pronounce these words now, Maria.

The median number of student frozen responses was 70. The range was great, running from 0 to 160.

10. S. Solicits (unrestricted): The data shows that students seldom ask 'real' questions. The median number of unrestricted solicitations 11, is very low. In a class of 15 students, each adult would be asking one question or less per hour. Almost all student questions are directed to the teacher. In our observations, the pattern 6U
5U
(student asks a question, another student responds) seldom appears. The one exception to this pattern is classroom #10 -- discussed in detail later in this paper.

We are able to determine the actual number of student questions directed to other students by working with our data. By subtracting the number of teacher responses from the number of student solicitations, we can determine the number of times that students responded to other students' solicitations. For example, in classroom #1, we find

36 student solicitations (unrestricted)
-32 teacher responses (unrestricted)

4 student solicitations that were answered by other students in the class.

Using this method of calculation, we find the following:

FIGURE 7

Total Number of Student Solicitations[10] (Questions) Answered by Other Students in the Class

Classroom

#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15
4	2	1	1	5	2	1	2	2	20	0	1	0	2	11

From the above we can determine that the median number of times that students directed questions to other students was 2.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Much of the current discussion of L2 classroom teaching/learning rests on the assumption that classroom language can be described as involving either a focus on message (+ communicative) or a focus on form (-communicative). Our research indicates that such a binary (+/-) point of view is not accurate. Falling into a third category is the language of many teacher questions; we term this language "restricted". The language of L2 instruction, then, should be described as consisting of the following:

unrestricted - (+) communicative
restricted - (+/-) communicative
frozen - (-) communicative

Since these restricted language questions involve a complete focus on the message, they are (+) communicative. However, since these questions involve no genuine transfer of information -- an essential feature of native language discourse -- they are also (-) communicative.

The existence of these (+/-) communicative questions explains, in part, why teachers have not been able to move easily into genuine communicative teaching as researchers and teacher trainers exhort them to do. The fact is that (+) communicative teaching will not necessarily result simply because teachers move away from (-) communitive activities (A-L drilling, etc.)

2. The amount of restricted language in adult L2 classes is significant. In the majority (8 of 15) of classrooms observed, restricted language questions outnumbered unrestricted language questions.

3. Restricted language questions can be identified by the artificial (non-native) pattern of stress and intonation and by certain other phonological features.

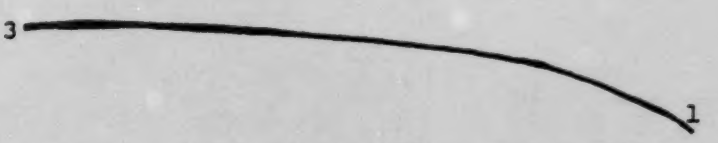
The differences in patterns in stress and intonation between restricted and unrestricted language questions are clearly observable:

A. Teacher Sol (Restricted): In the story, where do Mr. and Mrs. Grant live?

B. Native speaker Sol (Unrestricted): Phyllis, where do Mr. and Mrs. Grant live?

In example A, we find that the question begins with a relatively high pitch and moves slowly to a low pitch at the end.

A.



In example B, we find that the question begins with a relatively low pitch, rises to reach the highest pitch on the word 'Grant', and falls sharply at the end.

B.

There are yet other features which mark the restricted language question as non-conversational:

- o The tempo of the entire utterance is slowed.
- o There is less vowel reduction and less assimilation of consonants.
- o There is a change in the placement of primary and secondary stress.
- o There is a consistent lengthening of final words.
- o There are fewer contracted forms.

A second comparison of questions will illustrate several of the above features.

A. Native Speaker Solicits (Unrestricted): Whə didjə jɨst read, Jack?

B. Teacher Solicits (Restricted): What did you just read, Thi?

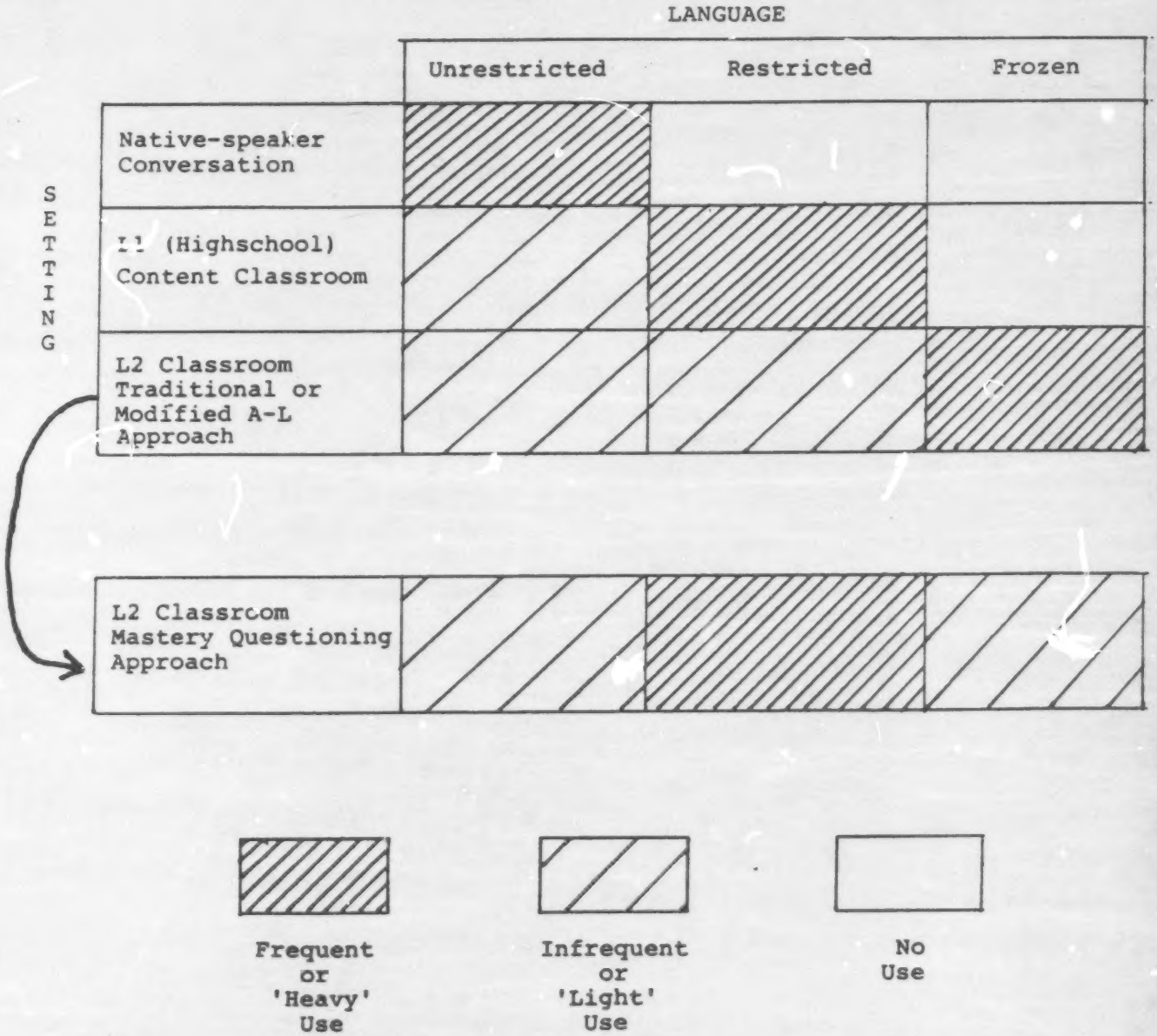
In B, the tempo is slower, there is no reduction of vowels, and there is no assimilation of the consonant /t/ in the word 'what'.

4. Classroom teachers have moved away from the audiolingual approach to language teaching; they are no longer focusing on or practicing the gramatical structures of English. As teachers retreat from the teaching of language structures, they are backing into an approach which we term 'Mastery Questioning', an approach which they experienced in their own elementary and secondary education. The 'Mastery Questioning' approach is based

on restricted language questioning and is therefore not genuinely communicative. We believe that L2 teachers were searching for a communicative teaching approach but fell short and settled for an approach which is neither clearly (+) communicative nor clearly (-) communicative.

Figure 8 illustrates how language varies across settings and illustrates how L2 classroom language is changing from heavily 'frozen' to heavily 'restricted'.

FIGURE 8



5. The reader may have noticed that so far in our discussion of classroom language and of classroom activity, we have not used the traditional terminology of skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

Our reconsideration of classroom language leads us to yet another conclusion about categorizing classroom language. The traditional four-skill breakdown, though useful for the measurement of an individual learner's skills through testing, is not so useful for the discussion and analysis of classroom work. We conclude that classroom teaching and learning should be viewed as consisting of the following activities:

Telling, Discourse, Reading and Writing

As we have seen above, telling is always communicative but discourse is not; and speaking is part of both telling and discourse, while listening comprehension can result from both telling and discourse. Teachers and curriculum designers can more effectively prepare classroom materials and activities by analyzing them from our 'activity' breakdown.

6. By using restricted language questioning, teachers, we contend, cause the pattern of classroom discourse to be non-native; the pattern becomes classroom-like, dominated by teacher talk. As the sociolinguists have warned us (see Sinclair, 1975, Heath, 1981, and Kramsch, 1981), those approaches which have dominated L2 teaching do not give the learner competence in discourse. Students do not learn to initiate conversation, change topics, ask probing questions, interrupt and so on. Restricted language teaching, like its predecessor, audiolingualism, guarantees that the ball will always be in the hands of the teacher and that the conversational pattern of the classroom will be very predictable. In our data, we find one pattern dominating.

1	(T structures)
4R	(T solicits)
5U	(S responds)
1	(T reacts)

The teacher structures, asks a question, and once the student has responded, rates the response with words such as 'Good', 'Okay', and 'Right'. Such a pattern is clearly not native-speaker-like.

7. Looking further at our data, we find further support for the above conclusion (#6). Student participation, we found, is limited largely to responding to teacher solicitations. The support in the data for this conclusion is surprisingly strong:

a. Students seldom address questions to the teacher

The median number of questions directed to the teacher in each class was 9. Therefore, about 60% of the

students in an average-sized class of 15 would direct one question to the teacher and the other 40% would direct none.

b. Students almost never address questions to other students.

Since the median number of student questions directed to other students was 2, we must conclude that each student sees the class lesson as involving a one-to-one relationship with the teacher.

c. Students almost never initiate new topics.

The median number of student structuring moves was 1. At that rate, fifteen class sessions would pass before each student had an opportunity to initiate a new topic or present a new idea for discussion.

d. Students seldom react.

The median number of student reactions was 15, indicating that each student reacted once per class hour. It is the teacher, then, who does most of the reacting in the classroom.

8. Teachers seldom correct student errors in morphology and syntax. Teachers' corrections are directed primarily at student errors in pronunciation. When teachers do correct student errors, they always use direct correction. That teachers seldom correct student errors in morphology and syntax is not surprising in light of our finding that teachers are moving away from the traditional teaching of language structures.

The results of our data along with the conclusions we drew from the research in general provided us with a clearer understanding of L2 classroom language and L2 classroom communication. But after studying the data from our classroom observation #10, we realized that we could develop our definition of classroom communication even further. Moreover, we realized that this unusual classroom enabled us to identify an approach to teaching that would ensure that real communciation would be generated in the adult L2 programs.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION #10: A SPECIAL CASE

Teaching Without Restricted Language

The results of one observation (#10) are so interesting and the pattern of student-teacher interaction so unusual that we needed a separate section to discuss them. We will assign the teacher of this class a fictitious name--Mr. Smith. When looking at the data from Mr. Smith's class (see Figure 6, Classroom #10), we find that there are no 'moves' involving restricted language. Except for students reading from a newspaper at the request of the teacher, all the language was unrestricted. Because both teacher and students were reading newspaper articles from NEWS FOR YOU (published by Lauback Literacy International), we expected to find a significant number of restricted language teacher solicitations. Since the teacher was reading the articles along with the students, there was no information gap created by the material itself. Yet, there was not even one restricted language 'move' in the final tally. We find, moreover, that there were:

63 Student Structuring moves

189 Student Reacting moves

68 Student Soliciting moves

There were, then, more student reacting 'moves' in this one class than there were in 13 classes observed. Why is the language and the pattern of interaction so radically different in this class? The class was whole-group and teacher-led as were the other 14 observed.

It is important to point out, first of all, that the class size was very small--four students. But we do not believe that the class size was the determining factor. We had seen other classes which were quite small in size but which showed completely different patterns of interaction and significantly less unrestricted language.

Mr. Smith was, he told us, not trained in teaching. He was a volunteer and conducted the class based on common sense. Perhaps because he did not have the traditional teacher's view of students and of classroom teaching, Mr. Smith treated the students as equals in the classroom conversation; he deferred to the students when they spoke and was hesitant to interrupt a student even when she had changed the topic of conversation dramatically; he never forced the students to keep to the topic established by the newspaper article. The success of untrained ESL teachers (in Germany) has been detailed by Freudenstein (1983) who calls into question the traditional view of the effective classroom teacher.

The high level of student participation is especially surprising given the fact that the class lesson was, in our opinion, not very communication-oriented. It consisted of the students reading sections of articles out loud. Mr. Smith corrected their errors in pronunciation as they read--this explains the large number of frozen student responses in the data. (Figure 6) But when the students stopped reading, the teacher did not comment or ask 'mastery questions' relating to the article read. The students were allowed to begin discussing the article themselves or to ask the teacher questions about vocabulary, culture, politics, etc. Mr. Smith never asked the students questions about the facts in the article that they had just read. There were several lulls in the class conversation after a student had ended his or her reading; Mr. Smith did not rush to fill those lulls and the students simply began reacting, structuring or questioning him. The students did not, however, ask the teacher a single question relating to grammar or usage. And even though there was a well-defined structure to the lesson (the newspaper articles), the students often raised topics only tangentially related to the material that they were reading. At times the conversation literally leaped from topic to topic as the students questioned one another extensively while the teacher listened. Such "desultory conversation" is common to native speaker discourse where "participants are of equal status and have equal rights to determine the topic." (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975, p.4.) Below are some of the topics raised during the class hour:

"I painted my room and every six months, I paint."

"I make the doughnuts at the place I work."

"The prime minister of England is a woman."

"They killed the ambassador in my country."

"It's like when Kennedy died, remember?"

"The situation is just like the Lebanon."

"It's against my religion to smoke."

Every four or five minutes (our rough estimate), Mr. Smith would bring the class back to the newspaper article:

T Solicits (U): Okay, let's read again.
Do you want to read that next article, now?

Except for the correction of student pronunciation in reading, this directing of the students back to the articles was the only clearly recognizable assertion of control by Mr. Smith.

How can we describe the differences found between Mr. Smith's class and the other 14 classes? We find valuable the terms used by Massialas and Zevin (quoted in Edwards and Furlong, 1978):

dialectical teaching vs. didactic teaching

The 'didactic' teacher holds the initiative and constantly monitors the direction of the discourse. She takes the discussion where she thinks it should go, and limits the discussion to what she considers to be relevant to the lesson or topic. Conversely, the 'dialectical' teacher (Mr. Smith) promotes participation and learner self-expression by declining to act as the authority. The 'dialectical' teacher does not lead the learner or evaluate the answers learners give. As far as is possible, the learners are made to rely on themselves, on their own resources. In the class, the teacher is more a participant than a director. Since Mr. Smith was carrying out 'dialectical' teaching, it is not surprising to find that there is no restricted language in the data on his class. But teachers may worry about control. If larger classes were conducted along the lines of Mr. Smith's class, wouldn't there be chaos? Earl Stevick (1978) addresses this issue very well in his article, "Control, Initiative, and the Whole Learner."

Control and Initiative

Stevick explains that earlier in his career he had believed that in order to increase student initiative, he had to relinquish control of the class. We can state this as an axiom: 'To the degree we increase student initiative, to that degree we decrease teacher control.' But as a result of exposure to the Counseling-Learning approach to foreign language teaching, Stevick concluded that this axiom is false. A teacher can, he says, while handing the initiative over to the learners, maintain control as long as the teacher understands what teacher control is.

Stevick defines control as 1) the setting of guidelines and procedures, and as 2) the maintenance of a native-speaker model by which the students can judge the correctness of their utterances. It is not direct correction that Stevick is referring to in number two, but simply to the need for a model of correct speech in the classroom. Just as the one-eyed man is king in the land of the blind, so the native-speaker is controller or architect in the land of the language learners.

Stevick defines initiative as the ability to decide "what you're going to say, who you're going to say it to, and when you're going to say it." (P. 41.) It is very important that the learner not suffer as a result of taking the initiative; her contribution to the class discussion should be viewed in the same light as such a contribution is viewed in the real world of native language speakers.

In Mr. Smith's class, we find a good example of a successful 'teacher has control/students have the initiative' approach. The students took the initiative continuously throughout the lesson. They interrupted, changed the topic, asked the teacher questions, asked one another questions, commented freely, and so on. Yet, Mr. Smith exercised two very obvious mechanisms of control--he brought the focus of the group back to the articles, and he corrected the pronunciation of the learners as they read. Of course, many teachers would make use of other techniques for helping students with problems in pronunciation, but the framework is clear: a teacher can take the role of participant in the class, hand the initiative over to the learners, and still exert ultimate control.

By allowing the students to take the initiative, a large number of questions were directed to Mr. Smith. He responded to student questions 48 times during the hour. Comparing this figure to the other 14 observations, we realized how unusual this class is. (see Figure 6, 7U Teacher Responds, Unrestricted) Our tally sheet of Mr. Smith's class graphically illustrates how a second language classroom can contain the ping-pong, question-and-answer pattern that is so common to native speaker conversation. We recorded the following pattern:

6U	S	Sol	But she was in, in trouble, too, right?
7U	T	Resp	
6U	S	Sol	
7U	T	Resp	
6U	S	Sol	Does this happen much?
7U	T	Resp	
6U	S	Sol	
7U	T	Resp	
6U	S	Sol	
7U	T	Resp	
6U	S	Sol	
7U	T	Resp	
2	S	React	
6U	S	Sol	Was she divorced before?

7U T Resp

2 S React

2 S React What a story!

7U T Resp

2 S React

7U T Resp

2 S React With this money, she can to live the rest of her life.

2 S React That's right.

1 T Struct

Mr. Smith's class challenges what we have said previously about generating communication in the classroom. He has shown us that even when working with material in a way that creates no information gap, genuine communication between teacher and students can result. This communicative interaction is brought about by the following:

1) The teacher enters into the classroom conversation as a participant.

2) The teacher hands the initiative over to the students.

3) The teacher maintains control.

4) The teacher does not use 'mastery questioning' to generate student participation.

Creating Classroom Communication

Mr. Smith's class leads us to ask yet another question: What creates classroom communication? Jeremy Harmer (1982) suggests that foreign language educators erroneously presupposed that a methodology can bring about communication in the classroom. A methodology does not guarantee in any way that the results of the application of the methodology will be communication. "The mistake of searching for a communicative methodology is perhaps to suppose that the end and the means of arriving there are necessarily the same." (P. 165) Moreover, neither can syllabuses, says Harmer, be described as "communicative.' Syllabuses can only supply us with objectives or lists of language to be studied. Selecting, grading and organizing the language to be taught in no way guarantees that the students will be participating in real communication. Whatever the syllabus or methodology, it is only by looking at

the activities--what the students are being asked to do--that we can determine if the students and teacher are engaging in genuine communication.

A Definition of Communication

Though Harmer does not define communication as it develops from classroom activities, we attempt to do so. First, the language generated must be unrestricted; and second, the pattern of student-teacher interaction must correspond to the pattern found in native speaker conversation--sharing of initiative, turn-taking, false starts, interruptions, questioning of all parties, and so on. We realize, therefore, that Harmer has advanced the discussion of communication by identifying the basic question to be asked about the second language classroom with regard to student-teacher verbal interaction: "What are the students being asked to do?"

In the following section, we present an activity which we believe solves many of the problems that teachers have in generating communication in the classroom. We developed this activity as a means of illustrating the underlying requirements that must be met if students and teachers are to enter into serious and sustained communication in the L2 classroom. What lies at the heart of this activity is that the teacher is not prepared. That is, the teacher has not seen or read the materials that are to be discussed. The activity is designed for whole-class, teacher-led classrooms. After trying out this activity in adult ESL classes and after analyzing the data from a tally made during one class, we identified changes that were needed. We address the weaknesses and revise the activity in the following section.

THE TEACHER IS UNPREPARED APPROACH

The teacher asks the students to bring to class articles (from magazines, newspapers, or books) which are of interest to them. The teacher does not read or even look at the articles but passes all of them on to a fellow teacher or to a program administrator. The cooperating educator selects an article from the group submitted that she feels is best suited to the language level of the class. If resources permit, an article can even be edited or "written down" to a lower reading level. Copies of the article or of the 'rewrite' are distributed to the class.

The teacher never sees the article and therefore enters the class session 'unprepared'. The class reads the article silently. Students use their dictionaries if necessary but they do not speak to each other about the article at this time. After the article has been read, the teacher tells the class:

> I have not read this article and I will not read it--not even after this class ends. All I learn about the article will come from you. So let's begin. Please tell me about the article.

The class then explains the article, as they understand it, to the teacher. The teacher conducts herself as she would in a conversation with native speakers. The teacher should ask questions when some point is not clear or if some aspect of the article especially interests her. For example,

> Teacher
> Solicits (U): Are you telling me researchers think that eating broccoli will help prevent cancer. But why? Why is broccoli so special?

The above question was in fact asked by Joseph Coyle, one of the investigators on this research project. After the classroom observation research was completed, Coyle demonstrated this approach in three adult ESL classes in the Washington, D.C. area. In the third class, a tally was made of the 'moves' generated by the discussion of the article. Before discussing that data, we want to present some impressions of the three classes overall.

1) Students participated very actively in all three classes. We estimate that 80% of the students actively took part in the discussions. Approximately 20%, though, said little or nothing.

2) Students in two classes disagreed often on the main facts of the articles as well as on the main ideas presented. Therefore, they often interrupted each other and actually 'fought' for the floor. Turn taking was intense.

3) At times, there was a certain amount of chaos as students spoke simultaneously.

4) Some students verbally attacked other students, saying for example, "You didn't understand anything."
"You're wrong."
"What article did you read?"

5) In one class, a class in which the teacher had previously held open discussions, the students began directing themselves to one another frequently, seeking clarification of the main ideas of the article.

6) The adults behaved very aggressively in all three classes, more aggressively than in any ESL class that we observed.

Discussion

We considered all three class sessions to be highly successful, especially taking in account the fact that these adults had never taken part in such an activity. The adults often seized the initiative without much hesitation in the first two classes. In the third, the one for which we have hard data, they were somewhat more timid as a group; however, various individuals were very assertive. We turn now to the results of the observation of this third group. (Figure 9)

FIGURE 9

Demonstration Class (Group 3)

	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	FROZEN
1. T Structures/ Reacts	31	0	0
2. S Reacts	5	0	0
3. S Structures	7	0	0
4. T Solicits	47	0	0
5. S Responds	41	0	0
6. S Solicits	0	0	0
7. T Responds	0	0	0
8. T Corrects	Indirect 0		
	Direct 0		

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Data From Group Three

The data clearly shows the strengths and weaknesses of this classroom lesson. On the positive side, we find:

1) All of the language of all of the moves was unrestricted.

2) There was much of the ping-pong pattern of interaction (question-answer-question-answer...) that marks native language discourse. The following segment of the class illustrates this pattern:

4U T Sol

5U S Resp

4U T Sol

5U S Resp

4U T Sol

5U S Resp

1 T React

3 S Struct

4U T Sol

5U S Resp

4U T Sol

5U S Resp

4U T Sol

5U S Resp

1 T React

But after comparing this data to that of Mr. Smith's class, we immediately identify serious weaknesses in this demonstration lesson.

1) There were no student solicitations

2) There were only a limited number of student reactions

3) The teacher's 'moves' dominate the data:

36 Teacher Reactions

44 Teacher Solicitations

4) The students did not seize the initiative as they had done in Mr. Smith's class. They did not contradict each other, and they almost never interrupted one another to seize the next turn. (Of course, it is important to note that this group of adults appeared to have very limited experience with this more open conversation approach.)

We believe that the adults in Mr. Smith's class had come to understand that the initiative was theirs to take. Learners may require a certain number of hours of exposure to this 'Teacher Is Unprepared' approach before they comprehend how broad their rights are in classroom interaction.

The weaknesses revealed by the data enabled us to make adjustments in our approach. In the following section, we present the changes we recommend be made to the above lesson.

REVISIONS TO THE 'TEACHER IS UNPREPARED APPROACH'

If there is to be real conversation in the classroom, the learners must be asking questions. Two changes in our approach can enable the learners to dominate the solicitations as well as dominate the responses:

1) The teacher distributes the article to some but not to all of the learners in the class. Three or four learners (in a class of 16, for example) join the teacher in trying to find out what the article was about. The teacher does not, though, fall back to a position of observer. The teacher should participate--but as one among equals. In each session, or in each discussion, different students can take the role of 'unprepared' participants.

2) At the end of the discussion of the article, the teacher sends those learners who had not read the article (the unprepared ones) to another class. There they must tell other adults about the article. All of their information comes from the original discussion with their own classmates and teacher. These selected learners will therefore be motivated to listen carefully and to ask questions.

   This need to do something with the information received, Keith Johnson (1982) says, is critical in classroom communication activity since it ensures that the learners will listen and will process fully what they hear. Johnson contends that the information gap principle is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to ensure the process of communication; the learner must have a reason to listen.

   The sending of learners to other classrooms is not possible in many programs. To meet Johnson's requirement, then, the teacher can have the adults write brief summaries of the articles. The adults can later check the accuracy of their summaries against the original article.

PEDAGOGICAL RATIONALE FOR 'THE TEACHER IS UNPREPARED APPROACH'

There are numerous other activities that involve an information gap and that generate both unrestricted language and native speaker -- native speaker patterns of discourse. (Johnson (1982), for example, offers a wide variety of such activities, many of which are well designed.) But we have focused on our 'Topic Discussion / The Teacher Is Unprepared' approach purposefully. Since students normally study English in courses that span weeks, often months, they need an organized program of study; they need more than a series of relatively unrelated 'communication' exercises or activities.

Taking our approach, a teacher can choose a topic and have the class work with that topic at great length. For example, the students bring to class articles on "Home Buying In The U.S.' (The topic can be made through a needs/interest analysis carried out at the beginning of the course.) This focusing on specific topics in depth over time is pedagogically sound for various reasons:

1) The General Educational Development of the Adult is Promoted. Not only does the adult learn a language, she learns more about politics, finance, leisure, social organizations, current events, etc. The course, by contributing to the intellectual development of the adults, makes maximum use of formal classroom learning time.

2) Vocabulary is Recycled Over Time. This recycling of vocabulary enables the learners to become familiar with the patterns of structure and usage that surround/ accompany the core vocabulary of each topic. For example, in the "Home Buying in the U.S.' the adults may discuss rezoning:

S Structures: The builder wants to get a property rezoned so he can build houses.

S Reacts : The property is zoned agriculture now.

S Solicits : So what's the problem?

S Responds : The neighbors don't want the property rezoned residential. They don't want more traffic.

Through extensive exposure to one topic, the learners gain confidence in the proper use of vocabulary items in context. This familiarity with vocabulary use is crucial to the acquisition of sentence level features of the target language. As Evelyn Hatch has written,

. . . if the learner cannot identify the topic and does not know the vocabulary, he cannot also attend to the morphological markers. If the learner gets to recycle the same topic several times with the same or different native speakers, he will then have the vocabulary and know the possible questions that will be asked. When he's got that much, he can recycle the topic again with another person and pay attention to his syntax and morphology. (Hatch, 1978, p. 434.)

3) The Acculturation of the Adult Learner is Promoted. A course in L2 learning must concern itself with both the language and the culture of the target group. John Schumann (1978) theorizes that the social and psychological integration (acculturation) of the learner with the target group is the major causal variable in L2 learning. We contend that the topics, by introducing the institutions, problems and interests of the American people, can facilitate the acculturation of the adult learner, and enable her to appreciate the 'backdrop' of native speaker behavior.

4) The Progress of the Learners Can Be Assessed. If a language program consists of a series of unrelated communicative activities/exercises, the teacher will have serious problems in assessing learner performance. With our topic approach, the teacher has a unified, integrated core of material on which to develop tests.

Final Comments

A number of researchers and educators (see Long, 1975, for example) in our field of second language teaching have come to believe that real communication cannot be generated in teacher-led, whole-group classrooms. Small-group teaching and individualized instruction have become increasingly popular. But through our research, we were able to identify one approach -- 'The Teacher Is Unprepared' -- which will bring about real communication in teacher-led, whole-group classrooms. We conclude this paper by restating those two conditions that we contend are necessary for generating real communication in the adult L2 classroom:

1. The language of the verbal interaction must be 'unrestricted'.

2. In the pattern of discourse, the initiative must lie with the learners rather than with the teacher.

We want to emphasize that though L2 teachers appear to be moving away from audiolinguism and toward more content, or task-based approaches, such approaches may very well be dominated by restricted language questioning. No matter how interesting the approach, teachers may resort to the style of restricted language teaching that permeated their high school classes. And since restricted language teaching is not communicative teaching, learners will not be prepared for participation in conversations with native speakers outside the L2 classroom.

ENDNOTES

1. In this paper, L2 will be used to refer both to 'second language' and 'foreign language'. L1 will refer, of course, to 'first language'.

2. Note on structuring (telling): Certain classroom activities appear to be 'telling' but in fact are not. A teacher could read aloud from a book as the class reads along in their books, for example. Although such language may be part of pronunciation practice, or reading practice, it is not 'telling' as we understand an oral presentation by a speaker to be.

3. This statement is actually a command by the teacher directing the student to respond; it is therefore a solicitation.

4. Moskowitz adapted Flanders' observation system so that it could be used in the foreign language classroom.

5. Moskowitz had dropped the term 'restricted' by 1976 at which time she published her final version of FLINT in Foreign Language Annals, Vol. 9, No. 2.

6. This research was summarized in Green and Smith (1982).

7. This three-part division of classroom language appears to parallel the distinction(s) made by Christina Bratt-Paulston (1970): mechanical, meaningful, communicative. However, she was categorizing audiolingual drills only. We categorize <u>all</u> drills as frozen.

8. No command can consist of restricted language. Commands are always genuinely communicative.

9. If we had realized the importance of comparing unrestricted language questions to restricted language questions at the beginning of our study, we would have divided Bellack's solicitation 'move' into two parts: commands and questions. Researchers who use Bellacks' system may want to consider making this change.

10. A student solicitation need not be a question; the solicitation could take the form of a command. But we can find no instance in our notes of a student giving a command to a teacher or to another student. We therefore treat student unrestricted solicitations as questions.

11. The interaction was

4U	Please read the next paragraph, Maria.
5F	The president said that defense spending...

We do not consider reading aloud as structuring. We consider it a frozen response to a teacher's request to read.

12. Almost all the teacher 'moves' in category #1 were reacting 'moves'. The teacher only structured once to open the discussion and once to close it. We therefore list the 36 as reacting 'moves'.

APPENDIX A

WCG
The Washington Consulting Group

1625 Eye Street, N.W.
Suite 214
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 457-0233

TO: ESL Teachers, Adult Programs

FROM: Joseph M. Coyle, Project Director, Adult ESL Research

RE: Observation of Classes

The National Institution of Education has awarded us at the Washington Consulting Group a one-year grant to carry out basic research into adult second language acquisition. The purpose of our study is to analyze teacher-student verbal interaction in an attempt to clarify the language acquisition/language learning distinction drawn by Stephen Krashen in his Monitor Model Theory of Second Language Learning. You will find attached a summary of our research with a list of our specific objectives.

We would like to ask for your support of our research; we would like permission to observe your class. Before visiting your class, we would welcome an opportunity to speak to you in person or by phone so that we can answer your questions about our study. At the end of our year of research, we will publish a report of our findings, copies of which will be sent to all those schools, colleges, and programs in which we have observed classes. Morever, we offer to make an oral presentation on our preliminary of findings, as well as on our survey of the literature relating to adult second language learning, to the staffs of those institutions that have helped us with our research.

Since Delia Bisgyer and I, who together are carrying out the research, have taught ESL to adults, we understand that observers can affect learners. We designed our observation, therefore, in a way that minimizes the effects of our visit on the class.

* We observe each class until we have gathered data from one hour of verbal interaction. Periods of silent reading or of writing are subtracted from that hour.

* We do not record the names of the teachers or students.

* We do not evaluate the class, the materials, the students or the teacher. We are interested in the nature of the language of the ESL classroom.

* We use no recording devices of any kind. No tape recorders or video recorders. We use only the tally sheet which is attached to this memorandum on which we tally pedagogical "moves". We also jot down the language of selected "restricted" solicitations and responses.

* We do not interview or talk to students unless the teacher directs us to do so.

Your participation is, of course, strictly voluntary. We observe only those classes wherein the teacher has offered to assist us. If you would like more information about our project. please call the Washington Consulting Group at 457-0233, and ask to speak to Joe Coyle. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

THE WASHINGTON CONSULTING GROUP, INC.

Joseph M. Coyle

Joseph M. Coyle
Project Director

Attachment
JMC/glp

APPENDIX B

RESTRICTED LANGUAGE QUESTIONS

In order to illustrate to readers what the term 'restricted' means in our study and in order to show how restricted language manifests itself in classroom interaction, we present a listing of restricted language questions. Our categorization of restricted language questions is not systematic; it is subjective. We remind the reader that 'restricted' language occurs most often in Teacher Soliciting 'moves'.

Restricted language questions have been called 'mastery', 'closed', 'test', and, 'pseudo' questions in the literature on classroom discourse. It is important to remember that the underlying identifying characteristic of 'restricted' language questions is that native speakers would never ask each other such questions in normal conversation.

Most, but not all, of the examples we present were taken from the record of our class observations.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, TEXT BASED

The teacher and students have both read material such as a news article or a reading selection introducing a chapter in a textbook:

T: In the article, who helped Mrs. Johnson find her missing diamond?
T: What problem does Anne have in this chapter?

GRAMMAR/SPELLING QUESTIONS

T: What's the subject here?
T: How do you spell 'childhood'.
T: 'News' takes what verb?

VOCABULARY BUILDING QUESTIONS

T: What's a 'pedestrian'?
T: How can we use 'rob' in a sentence?
T: What's the difference in connotation between 'fat' and 'chubby'.
T: What's this thing over here on the wall next to the window?

CONVERSATION STARTING QUESTIONS

T: What have you just read? (The teacher has read the material.)
T: What did he just say? (The teacher heard what was said.)
T: What are we doing? (The teacher tries to draw a student into an activity.

PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE QUESTIONS

T: How do we say this word? (The teacher points to the board.
T: Do we pronounce the 'gh' in 'rough' or not?
T: Is the /a/ long or short in this word?

GENERAL TRUTHS QUESTIONS

T: How many seasons do we have in the D.C. area?
T: When is Christmas?
T: What do most Americans eat fried chicken with?
T: Why won't the bus driver accept a five-dollar bill?

COMMON SENSE QUESTIONS

T: Who do you call if the roof is leaking?
T: Why is it so dangerous to drink and drive?
T: Why is milk good for you?

RAPID REVIEW QUESTIONS (The teacher prepares students for an interview or appointment.)

T: What state do you live in?
T: What's your native language?
T: How long have you lived in this area?

VISUAL AID QUESTIONS

When the teacher asks questions while using visual aids (blackboard, pictures, slides, realia, etc.) the questions asked are often restricted language type. Questions are 'restricted' language if the visual itself provides the answer or if the visual serves as a crutch.

T: What's the woman holding in the first picture?
T: Why is Mrs. Wilder calling a plumber? (The visual shows a sink overflowing.)

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